

What is claimed is:

✓ 1. A method for assessing deviations from a preselected medical treatment that has been indicated by appropriate diagnosis from a clinician, comprising the steps of:

- (A) gathering patient care data and diagnosing a malady;
- (B) storing said patient care data in a data storage means;
- (C) identifying an appropriate clinical pathway to follow in treating said diagnosed malady;
- (D) implementing said identified clinical pathway and recording clinical actions taken by a clinician in said data storage means;
- (E) monitoring said recorded clinical actions taken by said clinician to determine variations from said identified clinical pathway; and
- (F) alerting said clinician of a variance from said identified clinical pathway.

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein said gathering of said patient care data includes the use of a risk assessment tool comprising a rating scale to objectively characterize the condition of said patient's skin and wound.

3. A method according to claim 2 wherein said rating scales identifies factors most closely associated with the formation of a selected malady.

4. A method according to claim 3 wherein said factors are associated with

parameters that are identified and assessed by said clinician, and a rating number assigned to each of said parameters that corresponds to said clinician's objective assessment of a wound/skin condition.

5. A method according to claim 4 wherein said a finite numerical score is selected from a preselected range and assigned to each of said parameters.

6. A method according to claim 5 wherein a numerical score at or above a preselected value is indicative of a high risk for development of said malady.

7. A method according to claim 3 wherein said parameters, along with their assigned scores, are stored at a known, searchable, and retrievable location in said data storage means.

8. A method according to claim 7 wherein said monitoring includes reviewing each of said parameters, and identifying a most likely course of intervention to be followed by said clinician.

✓ 9. A method for assessing deviations from a preselected medical treatment that has been indicated by appropriate diagnosis from a clinician, comprising the steps of:

(A) gathering patient care data and diagnosing a malady;

(B) storing said patient care data in a data storage means of a general purpose computer;

(C) identifying an appropriate clinical pathway to follow in treating said diagnosed malady;

(D) implementing said identified clinical pathway and recording clinical actions taken by a clinician in said data storage means;

(E) monitoring said recorded clinical actions taken by said clinician to determine variations from said identified clinical pathway; and

(F) alerting said clinician of a variance from said identified clinical pathway.

10. A method according to claim 9 wherein said gathering of said patient care data includes observing and recording a patient's vital signs.

11. A method according to claim 10 wherein said recorded vital signs are each compared to a preselected value for said vital sign and monitored for deviations that are indicative of a high risk for development of a skin malady.

12. A method according to claim 9 wherein said implementing said identified clinical pathway and recording clinical actions taken by said clinician includes implementing a skin and wound care regimen.

13. A method according to claim 12 wherein said skin and wound care

regimen are monitored for deviations that are indicative of a high risk for deterioration of said skin and wound.

C1 14. A method according to claim 12 wherein said regimen comprises selection and application of dressings to a wound.

✓ 15. A method for assessing deviations from a preselected medical treatment that has been indicated by appropriate diagnosis from a clinician, comprising the steps of:

(A) gathering patient care data according to a predetermined regimen for diagnosing a malady of the skin;

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(B) storing said patient care data in a data storage means of a general purpose computer;

(C) identifying an appropriate clinical pathway from a plurality of pathways for treating said diagnosed malady;

(D) implementing said identified clinical pathway via clinical actions taken by a clinician;

(E) monitoring said clinical actions taken by said clinician to determine variations from said identified clinical pathway; and

(F) alerting said clinician of a variance from said identified clinical pathway.

C1 16. A method according to claim 15 wherein said regimen comprises

answering a questionnaire that quantifies a patient's satisfaction with his/her health status.

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